Each of the delegates was eager for an opportunity to address the Conference. They had come a long way; their expenses allowance was reckoned daily, and continued as long as the Conference did; all had carefully prepared speeches in their pockets. Speeches succeeded one another wearisomely, one after the other. Such quantities of eloquence had seldom been heard even in St. James's Palace. It seemed as though the speeches would go on and on for ever, and nothing else happen. The Conference was saved from so inglorious an end by a proposal, believed to have originated with Colonel Haksar, for an All-India Federation. This proposal was accepted in principle, and the Conference adjourned.

Two of the Indian delegates, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Air, Jayakar, on getting back to India, acted as mediators between the Viceroy and Gandhi, and eventually were able to procure Gandhi's release from prison for the purpose of discussing with the Viceroy the terms on which Congress would agree to call off the civil disobedience campaign and participate in bringing to pass the projected All-India Federation. Their conversations, which lasted several days, and were attended by Gandhi in his well-known costume and carrying suitable refreshment in an aluminium saucepan, resulted in what became known as the Irwin-Gandhi Pact, whose terms provided for the calling off of civil disobedience and the repeal of the decree declaring the Congress Working Committee an illegal body. It was also understood that Gandhi would attend the next Session of the

Round-Table Conference, and that a good number of the 25,000 in gaol were to be released.

The Viceroy was much criticised in England for thus negotiating with an acknowledged rebel. Mr. Churchill complained of a 'seditious saint striding half-naked up the steps of the Viceregal Palace,' and Lord Birkenhead referred scathingly in the House of Lords to a policy of emptying the gaols of India in order to procure delegates for a conference in London. It was his last public appearance, his splendid physique broken, his insolence become faltering and uncertain; a woeful, frightening